



COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE POLICY & FINANCING

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Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor • Joan Henneberry, Executive Director

DATE: Week Ending Friday, April 10, 2009

TO: Department of Health Care Policy and Financing Community

FROM: Ginny Brown, Legislative Liaison and Nicole Storm, Legislative Analyst

RE: Legislative Report – 2009 Session of the Colorado General Assembly

This week, **Modify Colorado Cares Rx**, SB09-132, Senator Boyd and Representative Kerr, passed on third and final reading in the House and the Senate then considered House amendments where the result was to concur and repass. The bill modifies the Colorado Cares Rx program and requires the Department to make information available to the public regarding the availability of lower-cost generic or discounted prescription drug programs.

HB09-1293, **Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act**, Representatives Ferrandino and Riesberg and Senators Keller and Boyd, passed Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees and passed on Second Reading. This bill would allow Colorado to leverage state funds to draw down additional federal funds to provide coverage to more than 100,000 uninsured Coloradans. The proposal also would help stem the rising cost of health insurance for businesses and families by addressing cost-shifting, one of the key drivers of rising costs, without increasing the burden on taxpayers. By assessing a provider fee on hospitals, Colorado would generate an additional \$600 million a year to provide coverage to the uninsured, and receive \$600 million in federal matching funds. The combined \$1.2 billion would cover more than 100,000 currently uninsured Coloradans through Medicaid and the Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). The funds also would improve hospital reimbursement rates for service provided through Medicaid and the Colorado Indigent Care Program (CICP). The bill is up for Senate third reading and final passage on Monday, April 06, 2009.

HB09-1273, **Health Care for Colorado**, Representative Kefalas and Senator Foster, was heard Friday before the House Committee on Appropriations and referred un-amended to the House Committee of the Whole. This bill creates the Colorado health care authority as a political subdivision of the state and establishes the mission of the authority, which is to create a health care system in Colorado that is the administrator and payer for health care services.

HB09-1047, **Alternative Therapies for Medicaid**, Representative Todd and Senator Williams, was heard Friday before the House Committee on Appropriations and referred to the Committee of the Whole. This proposal would establish a pilot program to provide chiropractic care, massage therapy, and acupuncture to an eligible person with a spinal cord injury.

HB09-1073, **Electronic Prescriptions in Medicaid**, Representative Massey and Senator Boyd, directs the department of health care policy and financing to study and report to the health and human services committees of the general assembly on the ability and feasibility of using electronic prescriptions in the medical assistance program. This proposal was heard on Friday before the House Appropriations Committee and referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Also on Friday, HB09-1222, **Medicaid Over-expenditure Authority**, sponsored by the Joint Budget Committee, passed before the Senate Finance Committee and Senate Second Reading. This legislation would extend the repeal dates of statutory sections authorizing overexpenditures for Medicaid; transfers of funds between the Department and the Department of Human Services; and transfers of cash spending authority. Repeal dates would be extended from July 1, 2009 to July 1, 2014; and from September 1, 2009 to September 1, 2014 and would allow the Department to continue to operate the Medicaid program.

For more information about legislative activities please contact Ginny Brown 303-866-3972 or Nicole Storm 303-866-3180 or access www.colorado.gov to search the General Assembly Web site. A legislative report will be updated weekly on our Web site www.colorado.gov/hcpf under Partners and Research, Legislative Information, Legislative Update.